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16 February 1965

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

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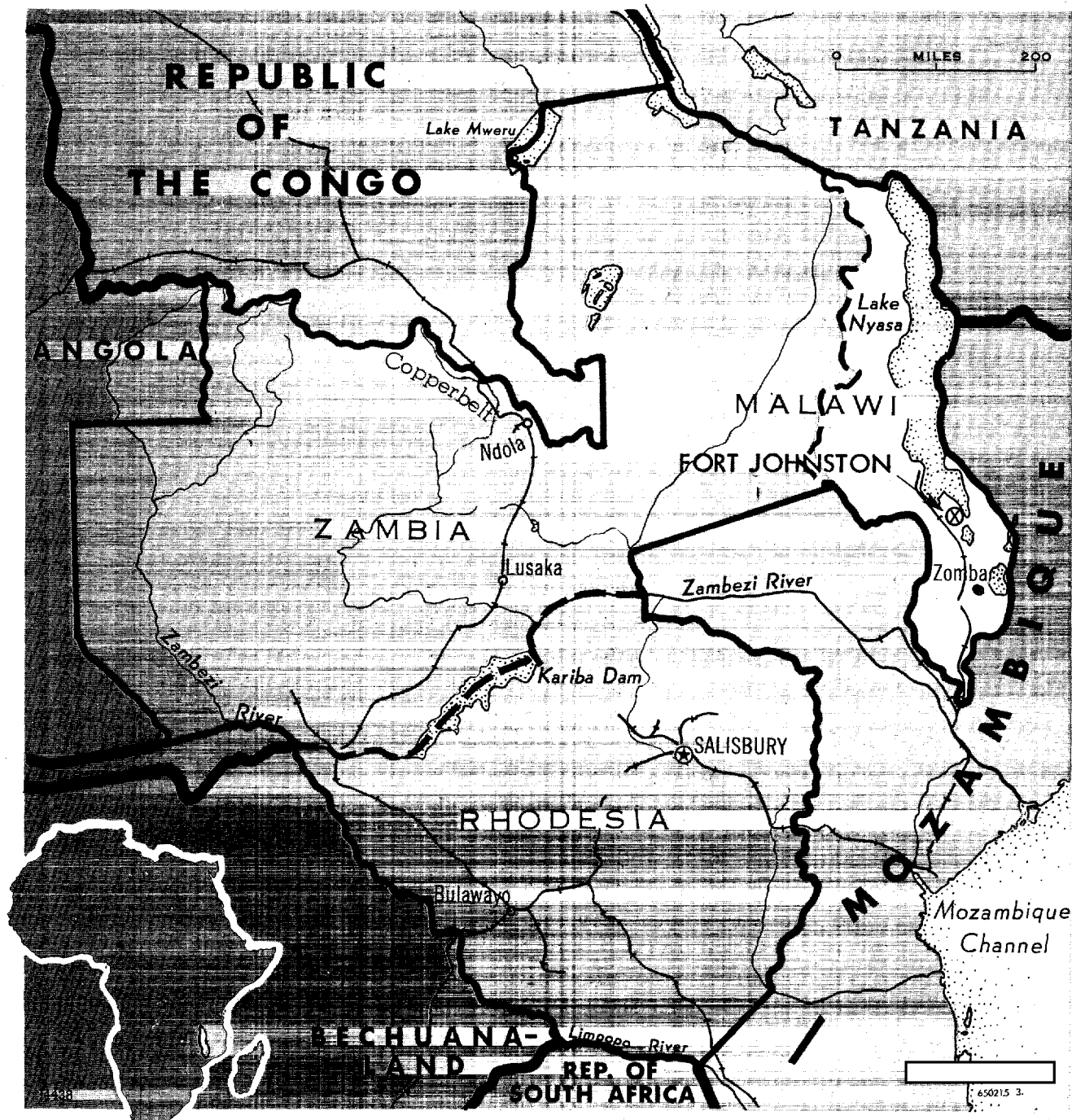
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MALAWI



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Malawi: A guerrilla warfare campaign to overthrow Prime Minister Banda apparently has begun.

During the night of 12 February, anti-Banda rebels led by former minister of education Chipembere attacked two police posts at Fort Johnston in south-eastern Malawi, cut communications, and captured arms and vehicles before fleeing back into the hills. Chipembere is one of six ex-ministers seeking to oust Banda who fired them last fall.

The ex-ministers fell out with Banda for various reasons, but mainly because he would not share authority with them and refused to adopt a more neutralist foreign policy. In particular they criticized Banda for his close and friendly relations with the Portuguese in neighboring Mozambique. Five of the ex-ministers have been living in Tanzania, while Chipembere--their ostensible leader--has stayed in Malawi, eluding intensive efforts to capture him.

Banda appears to have the advantage with a 2,800-man police force and an 800-man army, both under British officers. The rebels, however, can probably keep a terrorist campaign going for some time, and they may obtain help from Tanzania and from Mozambique nationalists. [redacted] (Map)

[redacted]

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Cuba: [Yesterday's] demotion of Carlos Rafael Rodriguez probably marks another move to undermine "old-line" Communist influence in the Castro regime.

Castro himself has assumed the presidency of the National Institute of Agrarian Reform (INRA), which Rodriguez had headed since February 1962. According to a Havana announcement, Rodriguez will remain in the cabinet as minister responsible for directing studies on Cuban economic problems. Castro thus avoids giving the impression of a move against the "old-line" Communists generally.

The demotion of Rodriguez, one of the most influential of the "old-line" Communists, will nevertheless increase their fears of an eventual complete loss of influence. They have reportedly been apprehensive since Castro's move last November against Joaquin Ordoqui, a prominent member of their group, who faces trial for antiregime activities.

Rodriguez' removal from the INRA presidency also emphasizes Castro's preoccupation with Cuba's economic shortcomings, and follows the dismissals for administrative bungling of the ministers of labor, economy, and foreign trade. Castro has designated 1965 as the "Year of Agriculture," and by presiding over INRA, will be publicly associated with Cuba's attempts to increase agricultural production. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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Mexico-Cuba: [The new Diaz Ordaz government appears to be reassessing its policies toward Cuba, although there is no evidence of an impending break in relations.]

[In contrast to his predecessor, President Diaz Ordaz seems to be giving deliberate publicity to such incidents as the recent seizure of an illegal shipment of blood plasma destined for Cuba and the hasty departure from Mexico of the Cuban diplomat who planned the shipment. In particular, the Mexican Trade Confederation's approval of a shipping boycott against Cuba--albeit without its own participation--may be a calculated test of public reaction, particularly from the articulate Mexican left.]

[Less publicized indicators of a stiffer attitude are restrictions on travel and banking facilities available to Cubans.]

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